

Non-Secure Item*Non-Secure Item***Non-Secure Item***Non-Secure Item**
ISTEP+ Applied Skills Sample for Classroom Use
ELA – Grade 8
(Writing Prompt)

The Benefits of Homework

1 Homework complaints are a fact of life everywhere. It takes up time and cuts into family life. Some students say that homework is too repetitive, too hard, and just too much. The stress over homework can lead everyone involved to wonder if it's worth doing at all.

2 However, when homework supports a student's learning and does not take too much time to complete, it can have several benefits. Let's take a look at some of them.

Support for achievement and learning

3 In "Homework Research and Policy," Harris Cooper of the University of Missouri-Columbia reviewed 20 homework studies conducted since 1967. He found that most of the research was in favor of homework. Cooper found that the average high school student in a class that gave homework did better than two-thirds of the students in a no-homework class. In studies comparing the time spent on homework to achievement, most showed that students who did more homework had better grades and test scores.

4 Achievement increases were highest for high school students. However, homework helps students at all grade levels to develop good study habits and positive attitudes toward school. Too much homework, though, can have the opposite effect. Leading education groups agree that students should do about 10 minutes of homework per grade level. Fourth-graders, for example, should do no more than 40 minutes of homework each day. Junior high and high school students could do an hour or more.

5 Homework can also strengthen skills taught at school. What may appear to be "busy work" can actually be skill practice, especially in subjects such as math and spelling. While doing the same kind of math problem over and over may seem boring, it can make knowing how to solve that type of problem automatic.

6 In addition, homework supports better study skills and attitudes toward learning. Since students usually must do homework alone, they learn how to solve problems. This prepares them for later success in school and work. Studying for a test prepares the student not only to learn the material, but also *how* best to study.

Benefits beyond school

7 The benefits of homework go even beyond the classroom. Doing homework helps students learn important skills, such as self-discipline and time management.

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8 Homework benefits families as well. A 2007 MetLife survey of teachers, parents, and students across the United States showed that almost 9 in 10 parents said that they liked helping their children with homework because it gave them time to spend with their children.

Conclusion

9 In the MetLife survey, most parents thought that their children’s teachers assigned the right amount of homework. Furthermore, most students felt they had enough time to complete the assignments. When homework supports the student and his or her learning goals, the majority of people agree that it can be a valuable learning tool that prepares students for success.

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| Passage: The Benefits of Homework | | | |
| Content Standard: 8.W.3.1: Write arguments in a variety of forms that – <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.● Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.● Use effective transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.● Establish and maintain a consistent style and tone appropriate to purpose and audience.● Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. | | | |
| Item Type: Writing Prompt | Pts: 10 | DOK: 4 | Grade: 8 |

You have read the article “The Benefits of Homework.” The author makes the claim that homework can positively affect student performance in school. Think about the evidence the author provides and consider if it fully supports the claim. Using details from the article, write an argument analyzing how effectively the author supports this claim.

Be sure to include

- your position on how well the author supports the claim
- details from the article to support your position
- an introduction, a body, and a conclusion